

S 3259

Forensic Science and Standards Act of 2016

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Science, Technology, Communications

Introduced: Jul 14, 2016

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Jul 14, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/3259>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]

Party: Democratic • **State:** CT • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jul 14, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Science, Technology, Communications

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 5795	Related bill	Sep 30, 2016: Referred to the Subcommittee on Research and Technology.

Forensic Science and Standards Act of 2016

This bill establishes a National Forensic Science Research Initiative, carried out by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to improve, expand, and coordinate federal research in forensic sciences.

The bill establishes a National Forensic Science Coordinating Office to coordinate with relevant federal agencies in the development of: (1) a unified federal research strategy; and (2) any necessary programs, policies, and budgets to support implementation of the research strategy.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) shall contract with the National Research Council to develop a report: (1) identifying the most critical challenges in forensic science that require further research, and (2) making recommendations for research to address those challenges.

The bill states that each external forensic science research grant awarded by a federal agency under this bill shall be subject to a specified competitive merit-review process.

The NSF shall:

- award forensic science basic research grants to improve the foundation and practice of forensic science;
- support one or more forensic science research centers; and
- conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the NSF's full portfolio of forensic science research and education grants every four years.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) shall establish: (1) a competitively selected Center of Excellence focusing on measurement sciences, technology, and standards in forensic science; and (2) scientific area committees to identify gaps in and opportunities for standards development in the forensic sciences.

NIST and the Department of Justice (DOJ) shall establish a National Commission on Forensic Science to advise the agencies participating in the unified federal research strategy and review recommendations on standards development in forensic science.

DOJ shall:

- encourage the broad adoption of forensic science standards, requiring each DOJ laboratory, and encouraging other federal forensic laboratories, to adopt these standards;
- promote accreditation and certification based on forensic science standards; and
- promote recommendations made by the National Commission on Forensic Science.

Actions Timeline

- **Jul 14, 2016:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jul 14, 2016:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.